

identify the object that is adjacent the airbag but merely to measure the position of the object. It is also understood that it can be used to determine the presence of the object, i.e., the received waves are indicative of the presence or absence of an occupant as well as the position of the occupant or a part thereof. Instead of an ultrasonic transducer, another wave-receiving transducer may be used as described in any of the other embodiments herein, either solely for performing a wave-receiving function or for performing both a wave-receiving function and a wave-transmitting function.--

IN THE DRAWINGS:

Please enter proposed revised Fig. 9 submitted herewith.

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-41 are presently active in this application.

Specification

The paragraph beginning at page 1, line 6 has been replaced to clarify the relation between the instant application and the parent applications. In particular, reference to U.S. patent application ser. No. 08/905,876 has been changed to 08/905,877. The '977 application was co-pending with the instant application.

Reference to the related application set forth in the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 17 has been removed. These applications are related to the instant application because they include common subject matter from one or more of the parent applications.

As a side note, applicants are verifying whether there is indeed no continuity between U.S. patent application Ser. No. 08/040,978 and U.S. patent application Ser. No. 07/878,571. Note that this is contrary and inconsistent with previous indications from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

In view of the changes made to the specification, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's objection to the specification has been overcome and should be removed.

Drawings

Proposed revised Fig. 9 is submitted herewith in which the side airbag is now shown along with the control circuit resident in the processor. Previously, Fig. 9 referred to the side airbag system which inherently includes an airbag. The corresponding proposed revision to the specification (the paragraph beginning at page 20, line 17) refers to Fig. 4 wherein an airbag control system for a frontal airbag is shown and which is coupled to a processor 101 coupled to the transducers.

The changes to the specification in connection with the description of proposed revised Fig. 9 do not introduce new matter.

In view of the submission of proposed revised Fig. 9 and the corresponding change to the specification, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's objection to the drawings has been overcome and should be removed.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Thompson et al. (US 6,020,812) in view of Varga et al. (US 5,943,295).

The Examiner's rejections of claims 1-41 are respectfully traversed on the grounds that Thompson et al. and Varga et al. should not constitute prior art as to the embodiments set forth in these claims.

Thompson et al. appears to be entitled to an effective U.S. filing date of June 26, 1995 whereas the present application claims the benefit of an earlier filing date, i.e., the filing date of, inter alia, U.S. patent application Serial No. 08/239,978 filed May 9, 1994. It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of claims 1-41 is disclosed in the '978 application (note that Fig. 9 and the description thereof in the instant

application are substantially identical to Fig. 9 and the description thereof in the '978 application). Accordingly, Thompson et al. is not available as prior art.

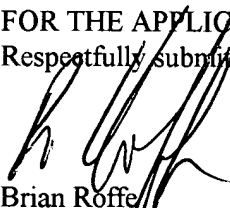
Varga et al. should be entitled to an effective U.S. filing date of February 6, 1996 whereas the present application claims the benefit of an earlier filing date, i.e., the filing date of, inter alia, U.S. patent application Serial No. 08/239,978 filed May 9, 1994. As noted above, it is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of claims 1-41 is disclosed in the '978 application. Accordingly, Varga et al. is not available as prior art.

In view of the foregoing, the rejections of claims 1-41 in view of Thompson et al. in combination with Varga et al. are untenable.

If the Examiner should determine that minor changes to the specification and/or claims to obviate informalities are necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned to discuss the same.

An early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

FOR THE APPLICANTS
Respectfully submitted,



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Enc.

Version with Markings to Shows Changes Made
Proposed revised Fig. 9



VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

U.S. PATENT APPLICATION SER. NO. 09/737,138
ACCOMPANYING AMENDMENT OF APRIL 27, 2001

RECEIVED

MAY 09 2001

TO 3600 MAIL ROOM

In The Specification:

Paragraph beginning at page 1, line 6 has been amended as follows:

This application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/437,535 filed Nov. 10, 1999 which ~~in turn~~ is a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/047,703 filed Mar. 25, 1998 which ~~in turn~~ is: 1) a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 08/640,068 filed Apr. 30, 1996, now U.S. Pat. No. 5,829,782, which ~~in turn~~ is a continuation application of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 08/239,978 filed May 9, 1994, now abandoned, which ~~in turn~~ is a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 08/040,978 filed Mar. 31, 1993, now abandoned, ~~which in turn is a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 07/878,571 filed May 5, 1992;~~ and 2) a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. ~~08/905,876~~ 08/905,877 filed Aug. 4, 1997, now U.S. Pat. No. ~~5,848,802~~ 6,186,537, which ~~in turn~~ is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 08/505,036 filed ~~July~~ Jul. 21, 1995, now U.S. Pat. No. 5,653,462, which ~~in turn~~ is a continuation of ~~the '978 U.S. patent application Ser. No. 08/040,978, now abandoned~~ which in turn is a continuation-in-part of the '571 application.

Paragraph beginning at page 20, line 17 has been amended as follows:

Side impact airbags are now beginning to be used on some vehicles. These initial airbags are quite small compared to the driver or passenger airbags used for frontal impact protection. Nevertheless, a small child could be injured if he is sleeping with his head against the airbag module when the airbag therein deploys and a vehicle interior monitoring system is needed to prevent such a deployment in that event. In FIG. 9, a single ultrasonic transducer 330 is shown mounted in the vehicle door adjacent to the airbag system 332 which houses an airbag 336 (shown in dotted lines). In a similar manner as described with respect to the embodiment shown in FIG. 4 with reference to U.S. Pat. No. 5,653,462, the airbag

1-A

system 332 and components of the interior monitoring system, e.g., transducer 330, are coupled to a processor 101A including a control circuit 101B (shown in dotted lines) for controlling deployment of the airbag 336 based on the information obtained by ultrasonic transducer 330. This device is not used to identify the object that is adjacent the airbag but merely to measure the position of the object. It is also understood that it can be used to determine the presence of the object, i.e., the received waves are indicative of the presence or absence of an occupant as well as the position of the occupant or a part thereof. Instead of an ultrasonic transducer, another wave-receiving transducer may be used as described in any of the other embodiments herein, either solely for performing a wave-receiving function or for performing both a wave-receiving function and a wave-transmitting function.

Approved

[Signature]

07/10/01

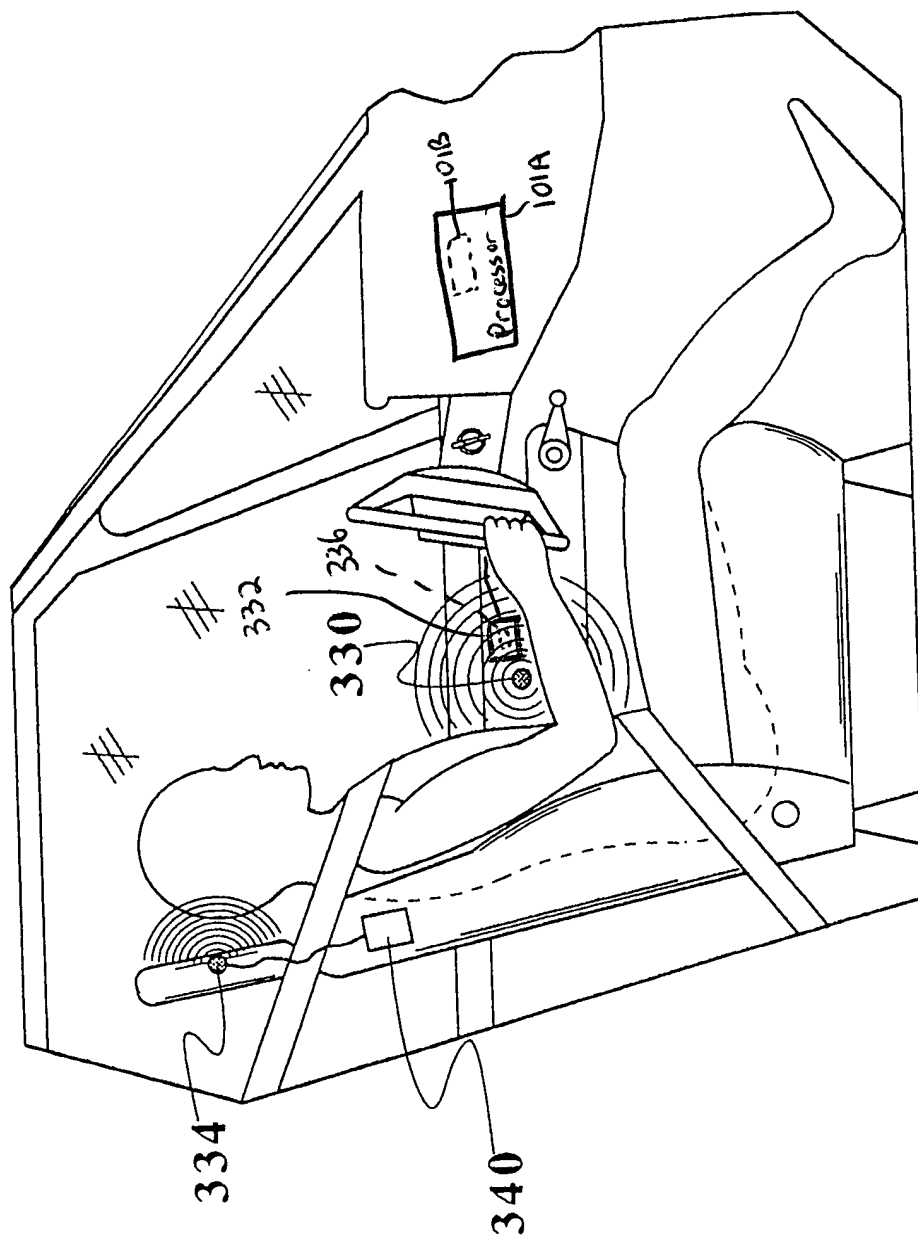


FIG. 9

[Signature]